

WITNESS

telling our stories, offering expressions of faith, being Christ-like
{Together}

THINK OF “GET IN THE PIC” AS OUR OUTDOOR CHRISTMAS PARTY. It will bring the nativity story to life in a playful, interactive way. It may help us to connect with more of our neighbors. Please let Rachel know if and how you can support this undertaking. Planning to attend and inviting a friend certainly counts!



“Get in the Pic!”

Part live nativity and part photo booth – yes, live animals!
The backyard of Boulevard UMC
Saturday, December 17
4:30 – 6:30

First Baptist has offered us use of their costumes. We still need someone on our end to facilitate that exchange and to make a few additions to the stash. Megan Moore, who was with us for Blessing of the Animals, has agreed to be our primary photographer. Fire building is covered; as is hot beverage and s'more service. 2 persons have said they'll greet/mingle with intention. 2 more greeters and we'll be in good shape (there are two entryways).

A CHILD'S CHRISTMAS IN WALES: It happens here on Sunday, December 11 at 3:00 pm. See the invitation extended to you and yours from the folks behind this heart-warming, festive event below.

Boulevard United Methodist Church



Wild the man and wild the place,
Wild his dress and wild his face,
Wilder still his words that trace
Paths that lead from sin to grace.

Knock down every proud backed hill!
Every canyon, valley fill!
Plane the soul and pray until
All its raucous ramblings still.

- Thomas H. Troedegger

December 4, 2016

On the Cover: A Road Runs Through It, Jan Richardson

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

We make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world (Matthew 28).

321 N Boulevard
Richmond, Virginia 23220
www.boulevardumc.org

An Order of Worship for 11:00 AM

(UMH) - The United Methodist Hymnal
(TFWS) - The Faith We Sing

* Please stand, as able.

Gathering

Introit	<i>Until Jesus Comes</i>	
Greeting		
*Call to Worship		UMH 795
*Hymn	<i>Blessed Be the God of Israel</i>	UMH 209
Prayer		

Proclamation and Response

Time with Children		
First Reading	Isaiah 11:1-10	
*Hymn	<i>O Come, O Come Emmanuel 1-4</i>	UMH 211
*Gospel Lesson	Matthew 3:1-12	
Sermon	“Wild Honey”	Rev. Rachel G. May
Interlude		

Thanksgiving and Communion

Our service continues with a liturgy for celebrating the Lord’s Supper. You may offer tithes and gifts as you come forward to share in the Sacrament. The altar rail is available for any who may wish to kneel after receiving.

Offertory	<i>What Feast of Love is This</i>
Prayer	

Sending Forth

*Hymn	<i>Heralds of Christ</i>	UMH 567
*Benediction		

*Parting Music

NURTURE

caring for one another, for our space, and for our growth as disciples

{Inward}

WE ARE PRAYING for Sissie Kerns, Garland Johnson, Ken Thompson, The Gooches, and Jay McKinney. Wish to add or restore a name? Say so via the offering plate or the church’s e-mail address.

OUR NURSERY is not staffed. However, the door to "Noah's Ark" is an open one. This space is on the first floor. Please feel free to exit and return at any point during this morning's service. We welcome infants and young children in the sanctuary. With them, we are more complete.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER in numbers.

	Ministry Costs	Your Gifts
November 1 - 26	\$11,427	\$9,564

OUTREACH

participating in ministries of compassion, justice, and advocacy

{Outward}

MID-NOVEMBER TO MID-DECEMBER’S FOCUS is United Methodist Family Services. We help them put hope into the holidays for children and families in Virginia. Making a check out to Boulevard UMC and designating it UMFS is the way to contribute.

THANK YOU for the love expressed for Syrians. In a week’s time you more than filled the box supplied by United2Heal. First Aid supplies and winter clothing will soon ship. Last minute donations are welcomed. Get them to the church before two o’clock on Monday. Though it is beside the point—the point is compassion—a verse from Matthew’s gospel illumines a connection: “So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, epileptics, and paralytics, and he healed them (4:24).”



Crossing Boulevard

with Rev. Rachel

I IN THOSE DAYS - Matthew 3

It may not be appropriate to comment on his hair. But look at it. Even characteristically neat iconography cannot contain the man. He is wild.

You are looking at St. John the Baptist by Meister von Gracanica, circa 1235. He (John) looks ready. He looks fired up. He looks like he could care less what I think of him, even daring me to further opine.

This is a portrait and these are the characters that cause me to fall in love with the Scriptures all over again. And so I say to myself, self: Let him be.

When he gets to the fire and brimstone stuff, hang tight (v.10). When he reaches for a locust at snack time, resist the urge to make that face (v.4). When he paces in his jail cell wondering what the heck Jesus is up to—that comes next week—allow him that space to anxiously wonder if he has gotten it wrong.

John is oozing the kind of discipleship that we might call “all or nothing”. He has gone off the grid and has no problem telling the polished religious types that their status was no good out there (v.9). It was the wilderness, after all. *Get in line, fellas.*

I have yet to put my toe in the Jordan River but when I do, I imagine I will break into a grin or into a bout of laughter. I will see the man making his splash. I will shake my head and look to God with appreciation for those who have played their part, however different from mine.

“You brood of vipers,” he was entirely comfortable hissing. [I doubt he hissed it, but the fact that he said it is comparably bold.] He wants to know why they bothered coming out for the service. Their faces had to have been burning.

Remember, though, that this is the baby boy whom Elizabeth and Zechariah believed they would never have. This is the one who once leapt in his mother’s womb as though he could barely stand the holiness of it all. He baptized people; which is to suggest that his ministry included tender moments. And he baptized Jesus. Maybe give a little bit to his many dimensions. Give the wild man his due.

Isaiah 11:1-10

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. ²The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. ³His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; ⁴but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. ⁵Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. ⁶The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. ⁷The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. ⁸The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder’s den. ⁹They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

Matthew 3:1-12

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, ²“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”³This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, “The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.’” ⁴Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey.⁵Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, ⁶and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁷But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruit worthy of repentance. ⁹Do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ¹⁰Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ¹¹“I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹²His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

IN CELEBRATION OF THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT

YOU AND YOUR FAMILY ARE INVITED TO



A READING

By Michael Gibson & Janet Rodgers

of

A CHILD'S CHRISTMAS IN WALES

By Dylan Thomas

Followed by a Holiday Celebration Gathering
upstairs --in Christus' Studio

When: Sunday, December 11th at 3:00 P.M.

Where: United Methodist Church Building
321 N. Boulevard on the corner of Stuart Avenue
Use Stuart Avenue Entrance